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SUBJECT:EXCHANGES: EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION SEMINAR AND
JOINT COMMISSION ON TEXTBOOKS

REF: MOSCOW 1751; 268; 2407

1. DEPT CONTINUES TO BE MOST RELUCTANT TO ATTEMPT TO AR-
RANGE SEMINAR IN EDUCATION INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN MARCH
WITH 12 SOVIETS IN ATTENDANCE. AS EMBASSY AWARE, THIS IS
COMPLETELY NEW TOPIC, ABOUT WHICH THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION
PRIOR TO SOVIET JANUARY REQUEST. TOPIC OF LITTLE INTEREST
TO AMERICAN EDUCATORS WHO WOULD HAVE LITTLE TO LEARN FROM
SOVIETS IN SEMINAR. WE ALSO FORESEE CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY
IN ARRANGING FOR AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS AND LITTLE POSSIBIL-
ITY OF FINDING ORGANIZATION TO HELP FUND US PARTICIPATION.
UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES COSTS OF FUNDING SEMINAR WOULD
BE PROHIBITIVELY HIGH.

2. EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT IT TAKES AT LEAST SIX MONTHS TO
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PREPARE PROPERLY FOR A SEMINAR UNDER THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTAN-

CES WHEN BOTH SIDES HAVE AGREED ON TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED,
AS WITH RECENT EARLY CHILDHOOD SEMINAR HELD IN SOVIET UNION,
AND SEMINAR ON HIGHER EDUCATION SCHEDULED HERE IN MARCH.

3. SOVIETS ARE IN EFFECT ATTEMPTING TO AVOID RETURN SEMIN-
AR ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, WHICH IS OF CONSIDERABLE
INTEREST TO US EDUCATORS, AND TO SUBSTITUTE A LARGELY ONE-
WAY SEMINAR DESIGNED TO PROVIDE A LARGE GROUP OF SOVIETS
WITH AS MUCH INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE ABOUT US UTILIZATION
OF COMPUTERS IN EDUCATION.

4. DEPT APPRECIATES NEED TO MAINTAIN FORWARD MOMENTUM IN
EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES, AND DOES NOT WISH TO BE TOTALLY
NEGATIVE IN RESPONDING TO SHIRINSKY'S REQUEST. WE ARE
EXPLORING POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR A SEMINAR WHICH WOULD TAKE
INTO ACCOUNT INTERESTS OF SOVIET AS WELL AS US
EDUCATORS. WE WILL ADVISE ASAP.

5. IN MEANTIME, WE ARE WILLING TO CONSIDER RECEIVING A
SMALL SOVIET DELEGATION (4 OR 5) ON EDUCATION INFORMATION
SYSTEMS IN LATE MARCH OR EARLY APRIL IF EMBASSY SO RECOM-
MENDS. SINCE SUCH A DELEGATION IS NOT NOW INCLUDED IN
REVISED EMBASSY BUDGET PROPOSAL (MOSCOW 1107), IT MAY BE
NECESSARY TO SUBSTITUTE IT FOR SOME OTHER PROJECT OF LOWER
PRIORITY IN ORDER TO FUND IT. COST IS ESTIMATED AT DOLS
1300 PER PERSON FOR TWO WEEK STAY.

6. RE JOINT COMMISSION ON TEXT BOOKS, RATHER THAN SET UP
SPECIAL MECHANISM, MORE PRACTICAL APPROACH WOULD BE TO IN-
CLUDE DISCUSSION OF TEXT BOOKS WITHIN PROGRAMS OF FUTURE
US AND SOVIET EDUCATION DELEGATIONS. INGERSOLL

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